

**BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS****REGULAR MEETING****Monday, July 10, 2000**

Present: June Bailey, James Johnston, Joe McLeland, M.S. Mitchell, Trix Niernberger, Leon Robinson and William Sanders

Also Present: Richard Lopez, SER; Carmelita Lane, H.O.P.E. Services; Keith Koontz, North Riverbend Neighborhood Association; Lola Howard, North Riverbend Neighborhood Association; Wendell Turner, North Chisholm Creek Neighborhood Association; Teri Dozal, Neighborhood Assistant – Evergreen Mini City Hall; and Doug Kupper, Janice McKinney, and Maryann Crockett (Staff)

President Mitchell called the meeting to order at approximately 3:30 p.m. The minutes of the Regular Meeting of June 12, 2000, were reviewed and approved.

1. **City Council Request – Review Proposal for the Facility located at 25<sup>th</sup> and Arkansas.**

Director Kupper briefly reviewed the item stating that the City Council had requested that the Park Board review the alternative proposals for the facility and receive citizen/neighborhood input. He stated that the Council had previously approved \$75,000 for roof repair; however, there were other cost factors involved with rehabilitating the building. He referred board members to Council Proceedings dated June 27, 2000. Mitchell requested that board members be furnished a copy of the lease with SER.

Richard Lopez, SER, stated that SER and eight other agencies had formed a coalition to provide various community services at the site. He said when the City leased the building to SER, they requested that at least 2,000 square feet be reserved for a community/neighborhood meeting room and an office for the Community Police. Lopez stated that the building consisted of 14,300 square feet. He said SER needs at least 6,000 square feet, Head Start needs 5,000 square feet, ACTS needs 2,000 square feet and with a community meeting room and Police office consisting of 2,000, there simply was not enough square footage to accommodate all the agencies. He commented that the architect had provided four different alternatives and cost estimates including: constructing an addition on two levels at \$2.8 million; constructing a pre-engineered metal building at \$2.1 million; constructing a new facility at \$3.1 million and constructing a smaller pre-engineered metal building at \$1.9 million.

Lopez said the coalition felt that the most cost effective, economical and efficient proposal was construction of a new facility. He said the current facility was an old building, constructed of cinder block, with a leaky roof and outdated HVAC and plumbing systems. He said the coalition was willing to fund two thirds of the cost of a new facility, and explained that they had applied for grant/foundation funding. He said grant funds could only be accessed based on an initial lease of ten years with a ten-year renewal option. He said the

coalition was seeking the Park Board's recommendation on what was best for the community. He said the coalition felt a new facility would be an asset to the surrounding neighborhood and community.

Mitchell asked if board members had any questions. Johnston asked if the building has been occupied since it was leased in February, 1999. Lopez responded no, because the roof leaked. Johnston referred to a comment in the June 27, 2000, Council Proceedings where it was suggested that a more practical option was for the City to utilize its funds to preserve the existing facility and encourage the coalition to construct a building at a different location. He questioned how the coalition was going to fund two thirds of the cost of a new facility. Lopez explained that Head Start had \$1 million budgeted over the next two years and that SER and ACTS could leverage monies they had designated for rental payments to come up with additional funding.

Wendell Turner, North Chisholm Creek Neighborhood Association, commented that the neighborhood had also submitted a proposal for use of the building with the Boys and Girls Club being the primary tenant. He said at that time the Boys and Girls Club National Organization was willing to provide a \$70,000 grant for building renovation. He made comments concerning the fact that even though the lease was revised, the building has remained empty since February, 1999. He added that the City was still paying utility and maintenance costs. He asked why the coalition leased the facility if it was too small for its intended use.

Johnston asked if the neighborhood association had presented its proposal to the City Council. Turner responded yes. Niernberger asked if the neighborhood proposal had been voted on by the neighborhood. Turner responded yes, that a committee of three different neighborhood associations (North Riverbend, North Chisholm Creek and North-End) had provided input into the proposal. There was discussion concerning the fact that SER was the only agency that responded to the "Request for Proposal" (RFP) for use of the facility. Turner explained that the neighborhood associations did not exist at the time the RFP was developed.

Keith Koontz, North Riverbend Neighborhood Association, requested that the building be renovated and used by various community agencies. Lopez commented that the existing building is not large enough to accommodate the needs of the various agencies.

Carmelita Lane, H.O.P.E. Services, stated that people in the neighborhood are concerned about the building being torn down. She said there are numerous vacant and abandoned buildings in the area that need to be either torn down or rehabilitated. She suggested that the coalition might be able to utilize one of those buildings. She mentioned that the neighborhood was also interested in a park to honor Patrick Garcia. She said there is a definite need for the building in the neighborhood and that she would like to see a compromise solution. She concluded by saying that she was not against anything the coalition was trying accomplish and that H.O.P.E. Services was originally part of the coalition; however, H.O.P.E. Services found another location from which to provide their services because of the delay in renovating the facility. Lopez commented that the coalition was not interested in an old building.

McLeland asked if the Boys and Girls Club was still interested in occupying the building. Turner commented that they had requested a cost per square foot. Lane stated that there was a need for a meeting room for the District Advisory Board (DAB) and various neighborhood associations. She also commented on the scheduling conflicts occurring at the Evergreen Mini City Hall, due to space requirements of various user groups.

Mitchell asked Teri Dozal, Neighborhood Assistant, to give a brief summary of the various groups utilizing Evergreen Recreation Center/Mini City Hall and the services they provide. He also asked her to list the agencies that could utilize the existing facility. Dozal commented that one group provided English speaking classes, that there was a free clothing store, that Azteca provided sports clinics for soccer, softball, baseball and basketball for children ages five through high school youth, and that H.O.P.E. Services provided various community services. She said that many times the groups have to work together and shuffle schedules to accommodate each other. She suggested that the building at 25<sup>th</sup> and Arkansas could be utilized by several agencies providing various services including Azteca, WICK, Community Policing, Office of Central Inspection, medical services and family counseling. She said the building could also be used for various association/agency meetings such as the DAB, neighborhood and 21<sup>st</sup> Street Task Force.

Bailey asked if SER was a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) agency? Lopez responded yes. She asked if they had explored the possibility of acquiring other land in the area. Lopez stated that the original concept was to locate the facility in the center of the Hispanic community. He added that the school district was also interested in leasing space in the facility. There was discussion concerning constructing a basement to the facility, which would provide another 14,300 square feet.

Mitchell asked about the possibility of constructing a new facility on park property. Director Kupper said staff could explore that option. Mitchell poled the Board to see if anyone supported tearing down the existing building. The general consensus of the Board was that the building not be torn down. Bailey commented that she would like to have input from DAB #6. She also asked how renovation or new construction would be funded. McLeland agreed and asked how each proposal would effect the Park and Recreation Department's budget. Director Kupper commented that none of the proposals should have any impact on Park and Recreation funding. Staff mentioned that land might become available through acquisition for the 21<sup>st</sup> Street Corridor. Lopez mentioned that no Capital Improvement Program (CIP) monies were scheduled for Evergreen Park within the next seven years.

On motion by Bailey, second by Johnston, IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY VOTED to recommend that the building not be torn down.

Niernberger stated that if the coalition was not interested in the facility as is, and since the facility had not been occupied, that the lease could be terminated. She said she had run several not-for-profit organizations that delivered human service, and she didn't see where the City had any obligation to provide the coalition space, other than the terms of the lease agreement. Lopez commented that the coalition simply requested additional space. There was discussion concerning the various proposals for construction and renovation of the facility. Bailey mentioned the agreement with Hoop City for construction of a facility at Grove Park. She said if the coalition or SER was interested in using parkland for construction of a new facility, they needed to develop a proposal for Board review.

Niernberger said it would be nice to receive a joint proposal from the neighborhood associations and the coalition.

It was further voted that any action to construct a new building or add on to the existing building be subject to a new application and processing through the DAB and other agencies involved.

2. **Status Report on Lincoln Park Water Feature.** Requested by Joe McLeland. Director Kupper reported that construction was scheduled to begin on July 16. He said demolition of the swimming pool, construction of the water feature and renovation of the bathhouse should be completed within 180 days. He said the City was currently letting a bid for the playground equipment.

Mitchell asked about the status of the program to transport children to Linwood Swimming Pool. McKinney said approximately fifty children per week were taking advantage of the service.

3. **Status Report on Fairmount Park Shelter Renovation.** Requested by M.S. Mitchell. Director Kupper reported that Mitchell had asked him to check on the availability of funding to renovate the enclosed shelter at the park. He said the neighborhood association had asked about installation of restrooms, floor replacement and installation of heating and air conditioning. He said a cost estimate had been provided previously but that he was waiting for additional information from Public Works.

### INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

- Financial Report for April, 2000. Mitchell referred board members to the April Financial Report. Mitchell commented that revenues looked good. Kupper stated that it can be attributed to Janice McKinney's leadership in Recreation. He said Summer of Discovery (SOD) was running smoothly, that the City would collect 100% of the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) monies and that expenses/bills were being paid in a timely and proper fashion.
- Copy of correspondence dated 6/13/00 to Capital Federal Savings regarding donation to bus children from the Lincoln Park neighborhood to Linwood Park pool. A similar letter was also sent to Jay Russell Construction.
- Article from the 7/4/00 *Wichita Eagle* entitled "Community Heroes" featuring board member June Bailey.

### OFF AGENDA ITEMS

On motion by Bailey, second by Johnston, IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY VOTED that the rules be set aside and that an item be taken up off the agenda concerning the Riverside Park System Master Plan.

Lucy Burtnett asked for a status report on hiring the architectural consultant. Director Kupper reported that the committee would be reconvening to re-verify the selection.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 4:55 p.m.

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M.S. Mitchell, President

ATTEST:

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Maryann Crockett, Clerk